

# **Challenges to Measuring Quality of Substance Abuse Services**

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# Today's Presentation

- Describe Washington Circle Group (WCG) performance measures
  - continuum of care framework
  - use of administrative transaction data
- Discuss three areas of administrative challenges
  - organizational structure of service provision
  - patient and provider behavior
  - coding issues



# Framework -- Continuum of Care

1. **Prevention/Education** -- Activities designed to raise the general awareness of substance abuse as a major debilitating disorder affecting individuals, families, and the greater society
2. **Recognition** -- Efforts at case-finding, including: screening, assessment, and referral
3. **Treatment** -- Activities associated with rehabilitation of individuals who have a substance abuse disorder diagnosis
4. **Maintenance** -- Activities related to sustaining long-term positive outcomes



# Washington Circle Group

## Core Performance Measures

Domain	Measure	Data Source
Prevention/Education	Educating Patients about AOD Disorders	Enrollee Survey
Recognition	Identification Rates	Administrative Data
Treatment	Initiation of AOD Plan Services	Administrative Data
	Linkage of Detoxification and AOD Plan Services	Administrative Data
	Treatment Engagement	Administrative Data
	Interventions for Family Members/ Significant Others of AOD Clients in Treatment	Patient Survey
Maintenance	Maintenance of Treatment Effects	Patient Survey



# First Measure: Identification

Percent of adult enrollees with an AOD claim, defined as containing a diagnosis of AOD abuse or dependence or a specific AOD-related service, on an annual basis.

$$\text{Identification Rate} = \frac{\text{adult members with AOD claim}}{\text{total adult members (full + part year)}}$$



# Second Measure: Initiation

Percent of adults with an inpatient AOD admission or with an outpatient claim for AOD abuse or dependence and any additional AOD services within 14 days.

Adults with AOD admission or with an

$$\text{Initiation Rate} = \frac{\text{outpatient index claim and additional AOD claim within 14 days}}{\text{Full-year adult members with index AOD claims}}$$



# Third Measure: Engagement

Percent of adults diagnosed with AOD disorders that receive two additional AOD services within 30 days of the initiation of care.

**Engagement rate** =  $\frac{\text{adults with } \geq \text{two AOD services within 30 days after initiation}}{\text{adult members who initiate AOD care}}$

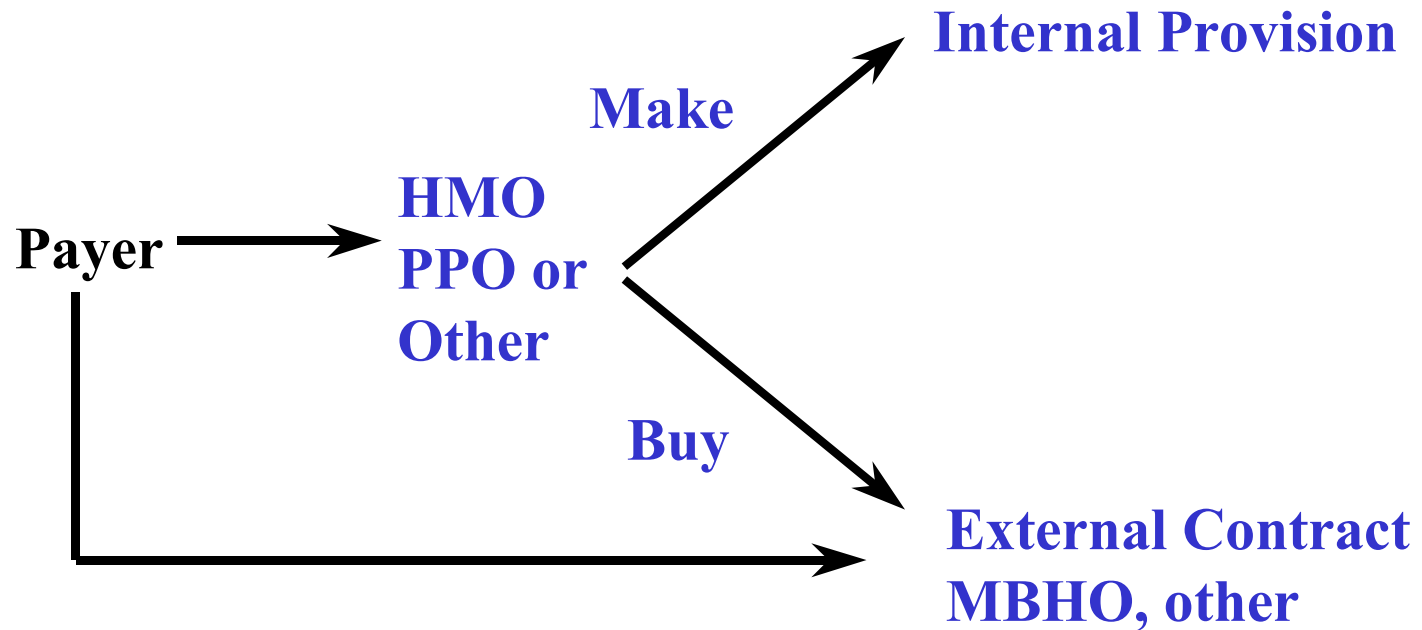


# First Challenge: Organizational Structure of Service Provision

- Employee Assistance Programs
- Benefit design
  - excluded services
  - deductibles and limits
- Employer and MCO carve-outs



# Pathways to Behavioral Healthcare



Adapted from: Hodgkin D, Horgan CM, Garnick DW. Make or buy: HMOs' contracting arrangements for mental health care. Administration and Policy in Mental Health 1997; 27(4).



# Second Challenge: Patient and Provider Behavior

- Privacy concerns
- Misreporting of AOD services by clinicians
  - stigma
  - covered benefits
  - financial incentives



# Third Challenge: Coding Issues

- Diagnosis coding
  - full range of SA codes not used
  - tendency not to code multiple diagnoses
- Procedure coding
  - currently CPT psychiatric codes used for SA
  - missing procedures, e.g. screening, brief intervention



# Conclusions

- Lack of procedure codes specific to SA treatment are a major barrier to SA performance measures
- Lack of standard data formats is one barrier in combining data from multiple sources, such as, state agencies, MCOs, MBHOs, and EAPs

